CHAPTER XVII

'THROUGHOUT ALL AGES, WORLD WITHOUT END'

THERE are hopeful symptoms at the present time of a renewal of interest in the study of liturgy in this country. But if this revival is to be healthy and the study is to make genuine progress, there are certain observations which it seems important that somebody should make plainly and openly at this stage. I have no commission or desire to pontificate on the subject as a whole; but it may be useful from more than one point of view to sum up my own book, both what it is and what it is not intended to be and to achieve, in the light of these general considerations.

This book is not, and is not intended to be a technical 'History of the Liturgy', though no doubt it could serve some of the purposes of one for a beginner in the subject. But such a History to be scientifically adequate would need a different sort of treatment, and in any case I do not know enough to undertake such a task. Indeed it is more than doubtful whether even a group of specialists in combination could put together a really satisfactory History of the Liturgy at just the present stage of liturgical studies. The old accepted outline of the subject began to fall to pieces under critical investigation soon after the beginning of this century. The last generation saw the production of more than one general theory—such as those associated with the names of G. P. Wetter and H. Lietzmann and others, or (in a different way) of Walter Frere—all designed to replace the old *dogmes d'école* by something which took more scientific account of new knowledge. Attention has naturally been chiefly concentrated among non-specialists upon those parts of these theories which sought to cast new light upon liturgical origins. But you cannot in fact revolutionise your view of origins without considerably affecting your treatment and understanding of the later course of liturgical history as a whole. And for the christian church, and ultimately for every member of it however unlearned, that is in the end not an academic but a *practical* matter as regards the eucharist. Slowly but certainly it will affect first what they think and then how they pray in the central and vital act in fully christian living, the corporate celebration of the eucharist.

All these theories have been presented with learning and some of them with brilliance. They have opened up new questions, many of which are not yet ripe for solution. The scientific study of liturgy has still to come to a final reckoning with some of their results, and in a number of matters to readjust its perspectives considerably in accordance with new evidence. But it is already clear that none of these modern theories—whether revolutionary or restatements of old theses—will serve as it stands for the

groundwork of that scientific reconstruction of which liturgical study is now acknowledged to stand in need. When that comes it will be analogous to the work of Wellhausen in the critical study of the Old Testament; whatever may be the final stability of its immediate theses, after it the subject will be studied differently from before. All other branches of church history have already undergone a similar transformation at the hands of scholars of every doctrinal allegiance. There is no reason to doubt that the history of the liturgy will have to undergo the same process.

The innumerable footnotes of this book probably bear sufficient witness to the fact that these recent attempts at a new synthesis have been before me in the writing of it. But I have also tried continually to keep in mind the fact that I had not set out to produce a technical manual, but a book for the intelligent christian—perhaps mainly the intelligent ecclesiastic—and him especially of my own communion, who is anxious to acquire a practical acquaintance with the subject as it now stands, in order to make what use of it he can in solving the formidable and occasionally desperate practical problems presented by living the life of the Body of Christ in our own times. This has involved reducing technical minutiae to the minimum consistent with a full and intelligible presentation of the subject (and also, where it seemed helpful, some repetition). But I think I can assure him that everything important in the work of the last generation of scholars which is at all likely to survive into the findings of the next has here been taken into account. If these recent theories make no great shewing in this book, that is because they have already been generally rejected by competent scholars as satisfactory basic explanations. The new facts for which they were intended to account have been included. The book is, indeed, mainly a description of the facts, because I do not think the time has yet quite come for theorising, except in the very broadest outlines.

I ought also to point out that this has involved skirting several important questions,[1] about which there seems to me to be an insufficiency of established facts for anything but speculative and inconclusive discussions, which would be out of place in a book of this kind. These matters will all have to be more closely investigated by somebody before anything like a definitive History or Manual can be written. These dark patches are scattered irregularly all over that part of the subject which is concerned with the first eight centuries. The vital period of course is that of 'origins' —say down to *c.* A.D. 125. Here I have tried to shew that the available evi-

[1] Those which I should most have enjoyed discussing at length are (1) the tradition of Asia Minor (*cf. pp.* 289 *sq.*): (2) the origin of the Latin liturgies (*cf. p.* 557, *n.* 2) whether the type is African or Italian in origin, and the influences which moulded it; and (3) the nature of the complexity which we cover by using the blessed word 'Antiochene' and the diverse elements, Anatolian, 'hellenistic' Syrian, 'semitic' Syrian (and others?) which are to be discerned behind its fourth–fifth century amalgam, and the various ideas these represent. There are, of course, other important omissions in the book which will strike the expert reader, but these seem to me the most serious.

dence does enable us to establish a few—a very few—certainties, which are just enough to enable us to reconstruct the later history, when it begins to be discernible, upon foundations which do not rest only on a bog of guesswork. As regards the rest of the pre-Nicene period, the later second and third centuries, we have still very much less information than we could wish. Yet I cannot help thinking, for what the opinion is worth, that as regards both the East and the West the essential outlines of the history of the *Shape* of the Liturgy are a good deal clearer from the second—or even the end of the first—century onwards down to the end of the fourth, than they are in the three centuries which follow. The jewish evidence, with the jewish-christian evidence of the New Testament, enables us to make out something of the period of 'origins'. After that our real key-point of knowledge is still the fourth century, about which we are comparatively well informed, because then the christian church comes out into the afternoon daylight of the ancient civilisation. We have to work backwards from that into the pre-Nicene period of secrecy, and forwards from it into the night of the dark ages after the collapse of civilisation.

The first process is usually both safer and easier than the other. The pre-Nicene church lived and thought and worshipped within the world of the imperial-hellenistic civilisation, even when it stood consciously embattled against it; and that world is still there in the fourth century. There is thus a real homogeneity of background between the fourth century and the period before it, even though we have to take account of the considerable changes in christian ideas brought about by the changed political situation of the church after Constantine. But between the fourth century and the growing secular chaos of the period which follows there is no such continuity of framework and background. We are apt not to allow enough for the tremendous break-up of ideas in the confusion of the barbarian centuries, just because the literary sources for the period come from those ecclesiastical circles which were trying manfully to conserve all that could be saved of the old civilised way of thinking. Even in the liturgy, where continuity is on the whole more complete than in any other sphere of European culture,[1] these conservative efforts were in one essential respect unsuccessful. The forms of the liturgy were preserved, on the whole with a surprising fidelity. But the *thought* of the mediaeval Latin and Byzantine churches about the eucharist, their 'devotional' approach to it and the way the ordinary priest and worshipper regarded it and prayed at it, these things were in certain important respects quite different from those which the fourth century had inherited from the pre-Nicene church.

[1] The only possible comparison is in the realm of law, where the work of Justinian did transmit the principles of imperial jurisprudence (with a Byzantine *nuance*) to the middle ages. But here there is hardly continuity. The Western study of Roman law in the twelfth century was largely a deliberate revival. And in practice the Teutonic law which had grown up in the interval held some of its ground, and even affected the theories of the civil lawyers to some extent.

Both the cause and the process of this breach of continuity lie in the dark ages.

It is unnecessary and in any case quite useless to deplore these changes made necessary by the history of the dark ages. There is no more reason to set up the fourth century (or for that matter the first) than the thirteenth or the sixteenth as the ideal for those who have to be christians in the twentieth. But it is very important that we should understand these changes, for they have abiding results now upon ourselves. It is not really surprising that Western protestants and Western catholics to-day should each somehow find it easier to learn from the Easterns than from one another, in spite of the wide difference of tradition between East and West. This is because modern Western catholicism and modern Western protestantism are in essentials mutually exclusive logical developments of *the same* 'Western' pattern of thought, as it emerged from the dark ages. Each is instinctively seeking a complement; and each is instinctively aware that in the other it will find not a complement but an alternative, and so turns more hopefully for what it needs to the East. But what seems hitherto to have prevented the East from being able to fulfil this dimly felt need of the whole West in a satisfying way is precisely certain elements of the Eastern tradition which arose in the same period *c.* A.D. 400–*c.* 800. They might be defined as what Byzantium added to Orthodoxy. It is one more proof that 'Catholicism'—'Wholeness'—is something more than and prior to the interplay of divergent local christian traditions.

It was in the dark ages that 'Catholicism' in this sense was first resolved into *divergent local traditions of thought*,[1] and the practical expression of this is in the history of the liturgy. But we know very little about the process. We have from literary sources an adequate knowledge—comparatively speaking—of the rites of the fourth century; and we have the rites which have evidently developed from them, as these begin to appear in surviving liturgical MSS. from about A.D. 700 onwards. Everything in between has to be worked out painfully and inductively from this earlier and later evidence. The result is that we know solidly very little about the *causes* of liturgical history in this period, and not a great deal about its actual course. Admittedly this is not quite so vital as the pre-Nicene history. Yet it is a most important period, during which the Eastern and Western groups finally draw apart, and develop each their own ethos. The evidence from this period is in some directions actually less in quantity than from the pre-Nicene church; and it is both more complicated to handle and harder to piece into a comprehensible story. This is probably partly because we know less of the cultural and devotional influences which shaped the changes then taking place. But, partly at least, it represents a

[1] The pre-Nicene local traditions of the eucharistic prayer are very divergent in expression, but so far as I understand them they are all different attempts to express the same things. This is not true in the same way of later differences.

more complicated course of development than in pre-Nicene times.[1] I do not know how it may appear to other students, but to me the fifth and sixth centuries appear to offer more individual questions to which we do not seem to have as yet even the outline of a definitive answer than any other period.

Few of these unsolved problems of liturgical history in any period seem likely to prove permanently insoluble, if we know where to look for the evidence. But this is often to be found in the 'background' of the period as much as in the obviously liturgical material. In the earliest period of all, the period of origins, the christian material has a jewish background as well as a Greek one, and it is the former which is much the more important and enlightening. It is even true to say that the christian evidence cannot be interpreted apart from it. I am aware that this is a conclusion which still fails to commend itself in all quarters. Nevertheless, surveying what is known of the apostles of the New Testament—not excluding Saul the pharisee—as well as the earthly life of Jesus of Nazareth, I am at a loss to understand how anything which is 'apostolic' in the sense of being aboriginal in the christian religion could be expected to be anything but jewish in its historical affiliations. The Old Testament (the only 'bible' of Jesus and the primitive church) with the jewish apocalyptic and devotional

[1] One great help towards disentangling this period, at least so far as concerns the East, would be a new and entirely recast edition of Brightman's *Liturgies Eastern and Western*. The book has done yeoman service. But it is something of a reflection on English liturgists that we still have to use as our chief source-book one published forty-six years ago, which itself was only a revision of Hammond's book of the same title, published sixty-five years ago. As it stands it is an accurate but uncritical print of the mediaeval texts of some of the most important Eastern rites as these are found in the best MSS. available seventy years ago. But excepting the Byzantine rite there is no liturgy in *L.E.W.* of which (in whole or in part) better and older MSS. are not now available; and several documents of first-class importance (*e.g.* Sarapion) are not included at all. I have used *L.E.W.* to give references because it is likely to be the book most generally available for checking my statements. But it ought to be said that it is no longer satisfactory for the purposes of students. What is wanted is a critical text of the rites (giving MS. variants, as in Swainson's *Greek Liturgies*, 1884) and indicating by a difference of type (*i*) those parts of them known to be older than A.D. 400; (*ii*) those which date from *c.* A.D. 400–800; (*iii*) mediaeval and modern accretions. The mere process of arranging the book for publication in this way would probably enable the editors to clear up more than one of the obscurities now besetting the history of the Eastern rites *c.* A.D. 400–800 (especially in the case of the Egyptian liturgies).

Nor should it be forgotten that the book as it stands is only a torso, of which the second and third volumes were never compiled, and never could be according to the author's scheme. (No materials for them, even, seem to exist among Dr. Brightman's papers.) But within more practicable limits than he seems to have contemplated, a second volume of inaccessible Latin liturgical documents or Latin texts still in need of scientific editing, and a third volume of *Critica Liturgica* of various kinds, could render the same sort of service to students that the old book has rendered so faithfully in the past. No one now alive is competent to undertake the whole task. It would have to be the co-operative work of a number of specialists under a small editorial committee, and would need a good deal of pains and trouble. But no other publication would in the long run so effectively assist the general progress of the study.

literature of the period between the two Testaments (some knowledge of which is discernible in parts of our Lord's own teaching, and some of which is significantly quoted as 'scripture' both by New Testament writers and some of the second century fathers) and also the literature of earlier rabbinism—all this can teach us much about the oriental world out of which christianity came. The hellenistic world into which it came *created* nothing in the religion of the New Testament, though hellenistic judaism began to influence its presentation in the second, perhaps even in the first, decade after the passion. But pagan hellenism at the first encounter found it already fully equipped with ideas and institutions of its own, and in this earliest period furnishes at the most analogies, and those as a rule not very close ones.

In the second and third centuries christianity became almost exclusively a religion for gentile converts. Though the marks of its judaic origin were never lost, the hellenistic background now becomes increasingly important. Only in Syria and the regions immediately to the North and East of it the native semitic or half-semitic background preserves in the local churches there a closer contact in some respects with the thought of the original judaeo-christian *milieu*. This differentiates them increasingly from the more and more hellenised churches of the Greek and Latin West. This cross-division of pre-Nicene christianity into 'semitic' and 'hellenistic' churches, which runs along a different line from that which later separated Greek and Latin christendom, is likely to prove of considerable importance in the elucidation of the evidence before A.D. 400. It seems to require more investigation than it has yet received, in which the special influence of the *Greek* Syrian churches in the hellenised cities as transmitting agents in both directions ought not to be overlooked. There is room for a good deal of adaptation to have happened in the course of this process.

As regards the latter part of the pre-Nicene period, of course, we shall always be mainly dependent on specifically christian material. Failing the discovery of new documents, the most promising line of advance seems to lie in a meticulous investigation of all the extant fourth and fifth century local traditions of the eucharistic prayer, coupled with an assiduous comparison with the writings of the pre-Nicene fathers. Just because liturgy is apt to be more conservative than theology, the later liturgical prayers often illuminate the earlier fathers and are in turn illuminated by them in a very remarkable fashion. This is one of the most pressing tasks now confronting students of liturgy, but it will be a laborious and detailed business, and one full of pitfalls, which will have to be left to the experts.

After this we are in the fourth century. From then onwards we are dealing with a nominally christian world, in which christian ideas and assumptions mould secular cultures as much as the latter influence christianity. In the 'second period' therefore (A.D. 400–800) and to a growing extent from A.D. 325–400 the christian liturgical material offers

information of some importance to the social historian, which has not yet been fully exploited. In return, the answers to liturgical problems are sometimes found to lie in the material of the social or even political historian rather than in that which is usually supposed to be the concern of the liturgist.

This great variation in the necessary background for the scientific study of liturgy in the various periods is, of course, quite natural when one considers the matter. But it offers a practical problem in the adequate training of students for this field of research. It is difficult to become really knowledgeable in such different directions, and this will probably lead to the sort of specialisation which is not desirable. Yet that some more scientific methods of training are now necessary seems obvious. After leading the world in the generation before the last, English liturgical studies—with the honoured exception of three or four names—have been steadily falling below the best work in Belgium, Germany and France for the last twenty years. This is partly from want of workers, but mainly from want of method. No subject can have a greater appeal for its own sake to christians than the record of what has always been the essential *life* not only of the church corporately, but of all the individual saints and sinners who have gone to God before us in the Body of Christ—the tradition of christian worship, unbroken since the Upper Room. No subject could have a more practical bearing on the problems of christian living at the present time, if only it is properly approached. Yet the number of young recruits to such studies in England in the last ten years has been infinitesimal. The apprenticeship required is somewhat exacting, necessitating the acquiring of languages as well as very wide historical reading. But not everyone need start by setting out to become an expert fitted for research. The real difficulty is that there are now practically no reliable 'Introductions' or 'Beginner's Manuals'. The modern ones are encumbered with dubious theories; the older ones are obsolete in their information, and are also as a rule not only academic but slightly repellent in their whole approach to the subject.[1]

The study of liturgy is not rightly to be regarded as a branch of canon law or christian administrative history; it cannot be properly treated as the mere study of a series of changes in 'regulations' about christian worship. It is here that I see the chief reason why English liturgical studies have made such disappointing progress since the death of Edmund Bishop. We have forgotten that the study of liturgy is above all a study of *life*, that christian worship has always been something done by real men and women, whose contemporary circumstances have all the time a profound effect upon the ideas and aspirations with which they come to worship. We must grasp the fact that worship cannot take place in an ecclesiastical Avalon, but to a large extent reflects the ever-changing needs and ideas of the worshippers. So it gives rise all the time to new notions by the

[1] I venture to repeat the recommendation of Dr. Srawley's book, *cf. p.* 208, *n.* 1.

interaction of these urgent contemporary ideas in the minds of those worshipping by ancient inherited forms. Thus arises the ever-shifting emphasis of christian devotion and 'devotions', which plays around the liturgy, interpreting it afresh to every generation and to every race. This is a psychological study of the utmost fascination, which requires insight and human sympathy as well as wide knowledge. It is an integral and most instructive part of the study of liturgy. Yet except for some essays by Edmund Bishop and some by Dom Wilmart (if we may borrow a French monk of Farnborough to adorn the ranks of English scholarship) it has been almost unrepresented in English work since the death of Neale. Until we take it more seriously we shall not understand the history of the liturgy, and we shall not put such dry knowledge of it as we may gain to any valuable use. In particular the immense eirenic possibilities latent in the understanding of how differences of christian practice first arose will remain unexplored. Yet these differences of practice are psychologically far more sundering to the laity of the different christian bodies than the differences of doctrine which they represent. It is quite true, as T. A. Lacey once said, that, in the broad meaning of the terms, 'It is theology which unites us and religion which divides us'.

Every science progresses not so much by the haphazard accumulation of facts (though established facts are always valuable) as by the asking and eventual answering of certain key questions. Liturgical studies have failed to advance largely because we have been asking the wrong questions. In so far as this book goes any way towards being a 'History of the Liturgy', such usefulness as it may have lies in its attempts to ask some of the right questions. They are not emphasised as new, but liturgical students will be aware how many of them have not been asked before, or at all events have not been put quite in the same way. I have tried to give the answers on the basis of all the evidence I know, indicating candidly where it seems to me that the material available still reduces us all to guess-work. It would be too much to hope that in a work involving many hundreds of small points of evidence my handling of them will in every case commend itself to specialists. Much, too, which is relevant to the right answers I have no doubt missed. Others will supply that, once the right questions have been raised. We know more to-day, much more, than Mabillon and Martène and Cardinal Tomasi and Forbes and all the rest of the older liturgists, polymaths though they were in their time. The difference is not only in sheer quantity of information, though our resources of facts are much greater than theirs, even if we do not always make better use of them. But we have also profited by their work to answer questions which they raised and could not answer, and the new answers have in turn produced new questions and new knowledge. If it stimulates others to ask the really revealing questions more aptly and more persistently than they are asked here, this book will have contributed usefully to the subject.

This may appear a somewhat hesitating recommendation of a book professing to give historical information. Emphatically, I should not claim that it is exhaustive or definitive as a history, though I am soberly confident that the broad outlines of the history of the liturgy as it is incidentally sketched here will not be greatly modified when the results of modern study come to be assessed, perhaps in a generation's time. Details will be corrected; considerable gaps will be filled in; some things will appear in a different proportion. But we are beginning to know enough now to be sure that at least we are working on right lines. Yet I repeat that this is designedly not a 'History of the Liturgy' but something preparatory to it—a study of how the normal Shape of the Liturgy came to have the form it has.

Every rite which goes back beyond the sixteenth century is to a large extent the product not so much of deliberate composition as of the continual doing of the eucharistic action by many generations in the midst of the varying pressures of history and human life as it is lived. The immense local variety of rites represents the immense variety of cultures, races and local circumstances in which the one Body of Christ has incarnated itself by 'doing this' in the course of two thousand years. During that time several great civilisations and empires and innumerable lesser social groups have risen and flourished and passed away. Many of them have left a mark in their time on the local liturgy as it survived them, in the wording of a few prayers or in some gestures and customs, on the cut of a vestment or some furnishing of the sanctuary. But under all this superficial variety there is the single fixed pattern common to all the old churches of the East and West, which was not everywhere wholly destroyed among the churches of the Reformation. This is always the same, not by any imposed law or consciously recognised custom that it should be so, but through the sole force of the fact that this way of doing the eucharist alone fulfils every need of every church in every age in the performing of the eucharistic action with its essential meaning.

The outlines of that ritual pattern come down to us unchanged in christian practice from before the crucifixion, the synaxis from Jesus' preaching in the synagogues of Galilee, the eucharist proper from the evening meals of Jesus with His disciples. The needs of a christian corporate worship gradually brought about their combination. The needs of a christian public worship have added to these inheritances from our Lord's own jewish piety only an 'introduction' of praise and a brief prayer of thanksgiving. The whole has a new meaning fixed for all time in the Upper Room. But the form of the rite is still centred upon the Book on the lectern and the Bread and Cup on the table as it always was, though by the new meaning they have become the Liturgy of the Spirit and the Liturgy of the Body, centring upon the Word of God enounced and the Word of God made flesh.

At the heart of it all is the eucharistic action, a thing of an absolute

simplicity—the taking, blessing, breaking and giving of bread and the taking, blessing and giving of a cup of wine and water, as these were first done with their new meaning by a young Jew before and after supper with His friends on the night before He died. Soon it was simplified still further, by leaving out the supper and combining the double grouping before and after it into a single rite. So the four-action Shape of the Liturgy was found by the end of the first century. He had told His friends to do this henceforward with the new meaning 'for the *anamnesis*' of Him, and they have done it always since.

Was ever another command so obeyed? For century after century, spreading slowly to every continent and country and among every race on earth, this action has been done, in every conceivable human circumstance, for every conceivable human need from infancy and before it to extreme old age and after it, from the pinnacles of earthly greatness to the refuge of fugitives in the caves and dens of the earth. Men have found no better thing than this to do for kings at their crowning and for criminals going to the scaffold; for armies in triumph or for a bride and bridegroom in a little country church; for the proclamation of a dogma or for a good crop of wheat; for the wisdom of the Parliament of a mighty nation or for a sick old woman afraid to die; for a schoolboy sitting an examination or for Columbus setting out to discover America; for the famine of whole provinces or for the soul of a dead lover; in thankfulness because my father did not die of pneumonia; for a village headman much tempted to return to fetich because the yams had failed; because the Turk was at the gates of Vienna; for the repentance of Margaret; for the settlement of a strike; for a son for a barren woman; for Captain so-and-so, wounded and prisoner of war; while the lions roared in the nearby amphitheatre; on the beach at Dunkirk; while the hiss of scythes in the thick June grass came faintly through the windows of the church; tremulously, by an old monk on the fiftieth anniversary of his vows; furtively, by an exiled bishop who had hewn timber all day in a prison camp near Murmansk; gorgeously, for the canonisation of S. Joan of Arc—one could fill many pages with the reasons why men have done this, and not tell a hundredth part of them. And best of all, week by week and month by month, on a hundred thousand successive Sundays, faithfully, unfailingly, across all the parishes of christendom, the pastors have done this just to *make* the *plebs sancta Dei*—the holy common people of God.

To those who know a little of christian history probably the most moving of all the reflections it brings is not the thought of the great events and the well-remembered saints, but of those innumerable millions of entirely obscure faithful men and women, every one with his or her own individual hopes and fears and joys and sorrows and loves—and sins and temptations and prayers—once every whit as vivid and alive as mine are now. They have left no slightest trace in this world, not even a name, but have passed to God utterly forgotten by men. Yet each of them once believed and

prayed as I believe and pray, and found it hard and grew slack and sinned and repented and fell again. Each of them worshipped at the eucharist, and found their thoughts wandering and tried again, and felt heavy and unresponsive and yet knew—just as really and pathetically as I do these things. There is a little ill-spelled ill-carved rustic epitaph of the fourth century from Asia Minor:—'Here sleeps the blessed Chione, who has found Jerusalem for she prayed much'. Not another word is known of Chione, some peasant woman who lived in that vanished world of christian Anatolia. But how lovely if all that should survive after sixteen centuries were that one had prayed much, so that the neighbours who saw all one's life were sure one must have found Jerusalem! What did the Sunday eucharist in her village church every week for a life-time mean to the blessed Chione—and to the millions like her then, and every year since? The sheer stupendous *quantity* of the love of God which this ever repeated action has drawn from the obscure christian multitudes through the centuries is in itself an overwhelming thought. (All that going with one to the altar every morning!)

It is because it became embedded deep down in the life of the christian peoples, colouring all the *via vitae* of the ordinary man and woman, marking its personal turning-points, marriage, sickness, death and the rest, running through it year by year with the feasts and fasts and the rhythm of the Sundays, that the eucharistic action became inextricably woven into the public history of the Western world. The thought of it is inseparable from its great turning-points also. Pope Leo doing this in the morning before he went out to daunt Attila, on the day that saw the continuity of Europe saved; and another Leo doing this three and a half centuries later when he crowned Charlemagne Roman Emperor, on the day that saw that continuity fulfilled. Or again, Alfred wandering defeated by the Danes staying his soul on this, while mediaeval England struggled to be born; and Charles I also, on that morning of his execution when mediaeval England came to its final end. Such things strike the mind with their suggestions of a certain timelessness about the eucharistic action and an independence of its setting, in keeping with the stability in an ever-changing world of the forms of the liturgy themselves. At Constantinople they 'do this' yet with the identical words and gestures that they used while the silver trumpets of the Basileus still called across the Bosphorus, in what seems to us now the strange fairy-tale land of the Byzantine empire. In this twentieth century Charles de Foucauld in his hermitage in the Sahara 'did this' with the same rite as Cuthbert twelve centuries before in his hermitage on Lindisfarne in the Northern seas. This very morning I did this with a set of texts which has not changed by more than a few syllables since Augustine used those very words at Canterbury on the third Sunday of Easter in the summer after he landed. Yet 'this' can still take hold of a man's life and work with it.

It is not strange that the eucharist should have this power of laying hold of human life, of grasping it not only in the abstract but in the particular concrete realities of it, of reaching to anything in it, great impersonal things that rock whole nations and little tender human things of one man's or one woman's living and dying—laying hold of them and translating them into something beyond time. This was its new meaning from the beginning. The Epistle to the Hebrews pictures our Lord as saying from the moment of His birth at Bethlehem, 'Other sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a Body hast Thou prepared for me; Lo I come to do Thy will, O God'.[1] On the last night of His life it was still the same: 'This is My Body'—'And now I come to Thee'.[2] It was the whole perfect human life that had gone before and all His living of it that was taken and spoken and deliberately broken and given in the institution of the eucharist.

The next morning the offering was completed. His offering cost the Offerer Himself. The death was real. Even now, and for ever upon the throne of the universe, it is still true that for three days the Son of Mary was *dead*. God is real, and is really worshipped only with a real sacrifice, which exacts a real offering that is 'devoted', wholly handed over to God. That is the meaning of 'sacrifice'—to 'make' a thing *sacrum*—to pass it over altogether into the possession of God. It may be doubted whether either theologically or historically 'destruction' as such is necessarily of the essence of such a notion, as de Lugo and most other post-Tridentine theologians, both catholic and protestant, seem to have conspired to teach. The destruction of the victim may be an accompaniment of many forms of sacrifice, but the older christian tradition, both mediaeval and patristic, was more accurate as well as more inclusive in its definition, perhaps because it was broader based, on pagan as well as scriptural *data*. (Rightly so, for sacrifice is something as wide as worshipping humanity, a rite of natural as well as revealed religion.) 'Sacrifices are properly so called when *anything is done about things offered to God*', says S. Thomas.[3] 'A true sacrifice is any act that is done in order that we may cleave in an holy union to God . . . for though it is done or offered by man, yet *a sacrifice is a thing belonging to God* (*res divina*) so that the old Romans used this term also for it', says S. Augustine.[4] There is no need to cite more.

On this showing it is not the 'destruction' of the victim, but the completeness of the offerer's surrender of it and the completeness of God's acceptance of it which together make up the reality of sacrifice. Its essence lies in the action of persons rather than in the fate of a thing. The destruction of the victim, if such there be, is incidental to its transference from man to God, a means to the end of releasing it irrevocably from the power of its human possessor into that of God. So when the old Roman Republic vowed to the gods its supreme offering, a *ver sacrum*, all male offspring

[1] Heb. x. 5. [2] John xvii. 13.
[3] *circa res Deo oblatas aliquid fit* (*S. Th.* II-II. lxxxv, 3, *ad.* 3). [4] *de Civ. Dei*, x. 6.

born between March 1st and May 1st were 'devoted', the young of all livestock to sacrifice by immolation, but the boy babies born that spring to life-long and irrevocable exile (so soon as they could fend for themselves) that the city and their own families might never profit from their life and strength. All alike were 'sacrificed'—'made *sacrum*'—even though the children still lived. What is necessary to sacrifice, however it be accomplished, is the complete surrender of the victim by man and its complete acceptance by God.

It may be that the form taken by the surrender of the human victims of the *ver sacrum* is only the more merciful relic of a sterner ritual, by which in older ages the boys had been actually destroyed along with the offspring of the cattle, though there is no certain evidence of this. But in any case human sacrifice has occurred among mankind as the most precious of all sacrifices, and whatever horror it may now evoke, it was not always done for merely horrible or ignoble reasons. It is among the most deep-rooted of all human ideas (as anyone who cares to analyse much current war-propaganda can see for himself). Unless we are willing to stultify something which is the very centre of the presentation of christianity in the New Testament, the Messianic Sacrifice, we must acknowledge that here, too, Christ came not to destroy but to fulfil. But here there could be no room for mercy! The surrender of a human Victim *self*-offered in sacrifice must culminate in 'Father, into Thy hands I will lay down from Myself (*parathēsomai*) My Spirit.'[1] Short of that, the surrender of the Victim by the Offerer cannot be complete. There must be 'destruction' here (but not necessarily in the eucharistic *anamnesis* of this) if there is to be reality of sacrifice, even though it be incidental. In such a case God's acceptance of sacrifice does not empty its destructiveness of reality; it reverses the destruction into fulfilment. The Victim is 'made *sacrum*'—passes wholly into the power of the Living God.

The resurrection is not Jesus' survival of death; all men do that in any case. It is the reversal of His death. The Divine acceptance of Calvary is in Easter and Ascension, and in what follows from them in the World to Come. For the latter we have only picture-language—the 'entering in' of the eternal High-priest to the heavenly altar; the bestowal of the crown and dominion of the everlasting kingdom; the 'coming' of one like unto the Son of Man upon the clouds of heaven to the Ancient of Days. These and other scriptural pictures are so many attempts to represent that real entrance of the temporal into the eternal, which is just as much a consequence of the incarnation as the irruption of the eternal into time. There is about them all a 'once-for-all' quality in consequence of which there is (paradoxically) something new but permanent in eternity, just as there is something new but enduring in time. It is this *double and mutual repercussion of time and eternity upon each other* in that act of God which is the

[1] Lk. xxiii. 46.

redemption of the world by Jesus of Nazareth, that is the essence of primitive christian eschatology. And of this the supreme expression from the beginning is the eucharist.

It is not myth or allegory which is at the heart of what the eucharist 're-calls' and 'proclaims' before God and man, but something rooted in a solid temporal event, wrought out grimly and murderously in one Man's flesh and blood on a few particular square yards of hillock outside a gate, *epi Pontiou Pilatou*—'when Pilate was governor', as they used to say in Judaea. That is history, with no admixture whatever of the eternal. And what follows, too, which is also 'proclaimed' in the eucharist, is history likewise, though it withdraws progressively beyond it. Between sunset on Saturday and dawn on Sunday the death was reversed. The New Testament finds no human words to describe what happened then in itself, but it had direct historical effects, which are described. A stone was rolled away, some soldiers fell unconscious, a woman cried aloud in a garden, two fishermen raced through the dawn to look at grave-clothes, and so on. These are historical events in space and time, and so on one side are all the things that happened during the forty days. The Ascension, on the other hand, is hardly describable in terms of earthly events at all. 'As they were looking'—that is factual, historical—'He was lifted up and a cloud received Him from before their eyes'.[1] That is obviously acted parable. The assumption of a Man into the Shechinah, with what that involves, is beyond historical description, even though there is in it some meeting-point of history and eternity. And after that there are only symbols, drawn from admittedly inadequate earthly pictures of priests and kings and the like.

All this together is 're-called'—made present and operative in its effects (*anamnesis*) in the eucharist; we need not go over the primitive liturgical texts again (*cf. pp. 242 sq*). We are here concerned only with the primitive understanding of what those effects are. But first we must note that just as the Messianic sacrifice has its meaning set for it beforehand at the last supper (*cf. p. 76 sq*) which is wholly within time, so it issues in Pentecost, which is the consequence within time of the eternal acceptance and efficacy of that sacrifice.[2] Just so the eucharist has its basis and pledge in the offertory of wholly earthly elements, and issues in that return of the eternal within the temporal in communion, in which the primitive church saw the gift of *pneuma* (divine 'Spirit') by means of the 'Body' to each of its members.

There is matter in this for deeper consideration than can be given it at the end of a long book, though it is relevant to all that the apostolic church thought about the eucharist. Here we limit ourselves strictly to the question of the eucharistic action and its effects, as these were understood in the earliest period. We shall not fully grasp its meaning until we learn to take much more seriously than our post-renaissance individualism is apt to do

[1] Acts i. 9. [2] Acts ii. 33

the biblical and patristic teaching on the solidarity of the human race as one entity. As the early church saw it, that race fell in Adam, that 'was the son of God',[1] by disobedience, and was restored by obedience in Jesus, the new Adam, that was 'the Son of God'.[2] The New Testament everywhere takes this solidarity for granted and does not argue the matter.[3] The later fathers, confronted with Greek individualism, sometimes found themselves compelled to discuss it at some length.[4] Their unanimous conclusion was that the principle of this human unity lies in that mysterious 'image of God' in which man was created. One and the same 'image' is implanted in each man, yet there is but a single 'image' in them all. It is this 'image' which makes of each man a 'living soul', or as we should say a spiritual being. It was this 'image' which by his disobedience was defaced but not expunged in Adam, God's created son; and retained by His obedience to the uttermost in the second Adam, God's begotten Son, Who is personally 'the image and glory of God'.[5]

Whatever we may make of the particular terms in which the apostolic and pre-Nicene church expressed these ideas, they represent something which is essential to the primitive and scriptural doctrine of redemption, which nineteenth century presentations of christianity were the poorer for obscuring. If we would understand the mind of the primitive church about the eucharist and enrich our own conceptions by it, it is especially important that we should recognise how thoroughly and generally these ideas concerning the 'image of God' in mankind were accepted in the church. So when Hippolytus wishes to speak compendiously and in passing of the redeeming work of Christ, he speaks of God in Christ 'presenting to Himself that image of Himself which had gone astray'.[6] When Irenaeus reaches the conclusion and climax of the most considerable christian treatise which has survived from the second century, he conceives it thus:—There is but one God and Father, 'And again there is one Son, Who fulfilled the Father's will, and *one human race wherein the mysteries of God are fulfilled*; Whom the angels desire to look into, but they cannot penetrate the wisdom of God, whereby His creature (man) is perfectly conformed to and incorporated in the Son; that His own Son, the Word, the first-begotten, should descend into the creature which He had formed, and be laid hold of thereby; and the creature in turn, laying hold upon the Word, should ascend to God, mounting above the angels, and *should become according to the*

[1] Luke iii. 38. [2] Luke iv. 3. [3] *E.g.* 1 Cor. xv. 45–9; Rom. v. 19, etc.

[4] These ideas are worked out most fully, perhaps, by Gregory of Nyssa, *Of the Creation of Man* (M.P.G., xliv.) who goes to the length of denying the legitimacy of speaking theologically of 'men' in the plural; there is only 'mankind' (*cap.* viii.). But I do not think there is a single Greek father before the fifth century whose works have survived in any quantity in whose teaching these ideas have not left plain traces, and they are common in some of the Latins, *e.g.* Augustine. Some Greeks (*e.g.* Methodius of Olympus, *Banquet*, iii. 4 *sqq.*) speak of our Lord as *physically* Adam *redivivus*.

[5] 1 Cor. xi. 7. [6] Hippolytus *Ap. Trad.*, i. 1.

image and likeness of God'.[1] For him, this doctrine of 'the image' is christianity 'in a nutshell', as we say. In the most serene of his treatises, before the long distraction of the Arian heresy began, Athanasius states the classical teaching on the incarnation and redemption thus: 'Therefore the Word of God came in His own Person, in order that, as He was the image of the Father, He might be able to re-create *the man* (*sing.*) made after the image'.[2]

Such a view closely associates the redemption with the creation of the world, as we have seen that the early eucharistic prayers all do by their 'thanksgiving series'. But with this view of redemption there necessarily went a doctrine of sin and atonement which has at least a rather different emphasis from our own. We Westerns all tend to lay the chief stress on the internal disorder caused by sin in the individual sinner's own soul, and view redemption mainly as the healing of each sinner's own wounds. Our doctrine of the work of Christ is, in technical language, 'soteriological', rather than 'cosmological', which has its own effects upon our eucharistic doctrine. Though this aspect of the matter was not ignored by them, the pre-Nicene writers had a plain sight also of a larger truth. Because any sin is the defacing of God's image which is one and the same in all men, any and every sin is a general shattering of the perfection of that image throughout mankind, and so an atomising of something which God created to be a unity. *Ubi peccata sunt, ibi est multitudo*, says Origen: 'Where there is sin, there is dispersion, there schisms, there heresies, there dissensions. But where there is goodness, there is unity, there is union, whence came that "one heart and one mind" of all the faithful (in the apostolic church). And to put the matter plainly, the principle of all evils is dispersion, but the principle of all good is drawing together and reduction from disordered multitudes to singleness'.[3]

No doubt the presentation of the idea here and in most of the fathers is Platonic, with its opposition of 'the one' and 'the many' as the principles of good and evil. But in its substance their thought is entirely scriptural, deriving ultimately from the Old Testament by way of the New. When S. John explains the final jewish prophecy of the old dispensation, pregnant now with all the meaning of the new, that 'one Man should die for the People' (*laos*)[4], he finds no other explanation of the Messianic sacrifice than this: 'that Jesus should die for the nation (*ethnous*) and not for the nation only, but that He might *gather together into one* the children of God that are scattered abroad'. Westcott remarks of this last phrase (*dieskorpismena*) that it 'marks a broken unity and not only wide dispersion (Matt. vi. 31; Acts v. 37). Such is the state of mankind in relation to its divine original.

[1] Irenaeus, *adv. Haer.*, v. 36, 3, conclusion. *Cf.* Origen, *de Princip.* II, vi. 3; *in Gen. Hom.* I, 3; *etc., etc.*

[2] Athanasius, *de Incarnatione*, xiii.

[3] Origen, *in Ezech. Hom.*, ix. 1.

[4] John xi. 50.

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[4] John xi. 50.

Cf. Isa. xlix. 6; lvi. 8'. The jews are no longer exclusively the *laos*, 'the people of God'; they have become absorbed, along with the gentiles 'made nigh (to them) by *the blood* of Christ' into that all-embracing restored unity of the new *laos*, 'in Christ Jesus, Who is our peace (with one another) Who *hath made both one*, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition (which divided the 'court of the gentiles' from the 'court of the men of Israel' in the Jerusalem temple) having abolished in *His flesh* the enmity (between us) for to make *in Himself* of the twain *one new man*'.[1] This healing of the deadly breach between jew and gentile in the ancient world (as rancorous and deep as that between Teuton and Slav in our time) is for S. Paul but one application of 'the mystery' of God's secret plan 'to *gather together in one* all things in Christ, both which are in the heavens and which are on earth; even in Him.'[2]

This is 'atonement', and it is also 'communion'. Contemplated upon such a background, not only the doctrine of original sin—that inescapable basic fact of human life—but the truth of its abolition 'in Christ' take on a clearer meaning. And so does the eucharist, in which the defiled 'image of God' is restored in men by the reception afresh of the one archetypal image, and mankind renewed and 'gathered into one' is presented to the Father 'in Christ' as the 'one new man', His recovered 'son'. So the purpose of God in man's creation to His glory is fulfilled in the eucharist. 'Glory be to God on high, and in earth peace to men of good will!' The more one studies the most ancient eucharistic prayers (the 'thanksgiving series'), the more it is plain that this is the fundamental theme of them all. This, so the ancient church believed, is not represented but *effected* at the eucharist. This is the 'coming' of the kingship of God among men, even within time, with its 'judgement' and its power, so that those who are not present to accept it or are present unworthily are condemned.[3] Here at the supper 'is the Son of Man glorified and God is glorified in Him '[4] Here those for whom He has appointed a kingdom, as His Father has appointed unto Him, eat and drink at His table in His kingdom, and sit on thrones judging.[5] Now He drinks again of the fruit of the vine,[6] yielded by the branches He Himself nourishes by the care of His Father the husbandman,[7] in the day that He drinks it new with us in His Father's kingdom.[8] So 'the people of the saints of the Most High' which God has willed 'to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren',[9] come as one man, 'like the Son of Man', upon the clouds of heaven to the Ancient of Days and being offered draw near to Him, and there is given to them 'in Christ' the kingdom that shall not be destroyed.[10]

This is the whole life of the church and of the christian expressed,

[1] Eph. ii. 13 *sqq.* [2] Eph. i. 10. [3] 1 Cor. xi. 32. [4] John xiii. 31.
[5] Luke xxii. 29, 30. [6] Mark xiv. 25. [7] John xv. 1 and 2.
[8] Matt. xxvi. 29. [9] Rom. viii. 29. [10] Dan. vii. 13 *sqq.*

fulfilled, done, in an action; for as Goethe (I think) says somewhere, 'the highest cannot be spoken, it can only be acted'. The more we can learn to think of our own worship at the eucharist not in terms only of assistance at a pleading or recollection of a redemption two thousand years ago, nor yet in terms only of 'my communion' (however true these partial understandings may be), but in terms of the 'pan-human' fulfilment of the Messianic sacrifice, the nearer we shall be to entering into the mind of the apostolic church about the eucharist and the further from most of our present controversies.

'There is one human race in which the mysteries of God are fulfilled.' It has been said that the problem of our generation will be the *motive* of civilisation. But in fact that is the problem in one form or another of all generations, the theory of human living. It has only been made more acute for us by the progressive apostasy of the liberal tradition in Europe for the last three centuries. The dream of the self-sufficiency of human power has haunted the hearts of all men since it was first whispered that by slipping from under the trammels of the law of God 'Ye shall be as Gods', choosing your own good and evil.[1] The shadows of that dream renew themselves continually in fresh shapes even in the minds and wills of those who serve God's kingship. Where that kingship is unknown or consciously denied that dream rules men, who are in the apostle's terrible phrase 'free from righteousness'.[2] In its crudest form, in the politics of our day, the pagan dream of human power has turned once more into a nightmare oppressing men's outward lives. That will pass, because it is too violent a disorder to be endured. But elsewhere and less vulgarly, as a *mystique* of technical and scientific mastery of man's environment, it is swiftly replacing the old materialism as the prevalent anti-christianity of the twentieth century. In this subtler form it will more secretly but even more terribly oppress the human spirit.

In the eucharist we christians concentrate our motive and act out our theory of human living. Mankind are not to be 'as Gods', a competing horde of dying rivals to the Living God. We are His creatures, fallen and redeemed, His dear recovered sons, who by His free love are 'made partakers of the Divine nature'.[3] But our obedience and our salvation are not of ourselves, even while we are mysteriously free to disobey and damn ourselves. We are dependent on Him even for our own dependence. Wearoe accepted sons in the Son, by the real sacrifice and acceptance of His Byd and Blood, Who 'though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; and being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him; called of God an High-priest after the order of Melchisedech'.[4]

[1] Gen. iii. 5. [2] Rom. vi. 30.
[3] 2 Pet. i. 4. [4] Heb. v. 8 *sq.*

Let us all with awe and reverence draw nigh to the mysteries of the precious Body and Blood of our Saviour. With a pure heart and faith unfeigned let us commemorate His passion and re-call His resurrection. For our sakes the only-begotten of God took of mankind a mortal body and a reasonable and intelligent and immortal soul, and by His lifegiving laws and holy commands hath brought us near from error to the knowledge of the truth. And after all His dispensation for us, He the firstfruits of our nature was lifted up upon the cross and rose from the dead and was taken up into heaven. He hath delivered to us His holy mysteries that in them we might re-call all His grace towards us. Let us then with overflowing love and with an humble will receive the gift of eternal life, and with pure prayer and manifold sorrow let us partake of the mysteries of the church in penitent hope, turning from our transgressions and grieving for our sins and looking for mercy and forgiveness from God the Lord of all . . .

Let us receive the Holy and be hallowed by the Holy Ghost.

℟. of the People

O Lord, pardon the sins and transgressions of Thy servants.

The Deacon

And in union and concord of minds let us receive the fellowship of the mysteries in peace with one another.

℟. of the People

O Lord, pardon the sins and transgressions of Thy servants.

The Deacon

That they be to us, O my Lord, for the resurrection of our bodies and the salvation of our souls and eternal life with all those who have been well-pleasing in Thy sight now and for ever and world without end.

Proclamation of the Deacon at the Fraction in the Liturgy of Addai and Mari